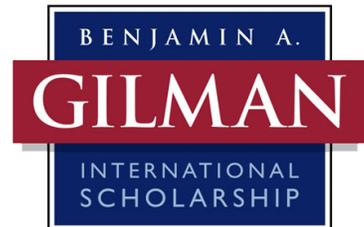


CHRISTOPHER CROWDER, CHINA, 2011

Pepperdine University
California



Studying abroad is an incredible opportunity to expand personal boundaries and pursue academic goals. My academic year in China was absolutely no exception. Studying in one of the world's largest cities, traveling throughout Asia, learning from professors in the top of their fields, and meeting lifelong friends collectively contributed to an unforgettable experience that will stay with me forever.

I lived in downtown Shanghai while studying abroad at Fudan University. As a top private institution in China, Fudan was initially intimidating. Learning from distinguished professors who often

serve as advisors to China's political leaders challenged and encouraged me to look beyond the status quo. Appreciating and learning from a different perspective enhanced my experience and understanding of life.

While abroad I also completed a professional internship at a large chemical engineering firm. This opportunity was the perfect complement to my international experience. While attending class, I worked three days a week as an English language marketing advisor and cultural consultant. Beyond the professional experience I gained, I spent two hours a day commuting — by scooter, subway, bus and taxi — fully immersed in Chinese culture and daily life.

Not only was it important for me to experience the urban culture of Shanghai, but I wanted to explore rural Chinese villages and other countries within Asia. Being on an academic year program, I had more time to explore such areas and interests. For example, I studied religions throughout

northern India during holiday, volunteered in Cambodia, ran the Seoul International Marathon in South Korea,

“Appreciating and learning from a difference perspective enhanced my experience and understanding of life.”

My experience abroad served to further cultivate my passion for both learning and traveling. Today, I am fortunate to have tied these pursuits with my professional career at Delta Air Lines. Studying abroad was instrumental in my professional, academic and personal success. I will always appreciate its profound impact on my academic and personal achievements.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

I had the unique opportunity of completing my Follow-on Service Project while studying abroad. I was selected as a Gilman-Reach the World Travel Correspondent for which I documented life abroad for elementary students in New York City. This project

allowed me to make an immediate impact while abroad. By sharing my experiences with younger students, I inspired creativity and the desire to attend college for many children that never considered the opportunity. I completed a combination of

weekly journal entries, field observations, and occasional Skype interviews with the classrooms to enhance their learning experience. The Follow-on Service Project was a great way to give back and inspire others to study abroad.